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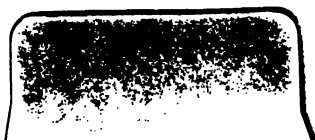
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ERRATA.

Page vii., line 12, for "numbered" read "numbed."

„ viii., „ 2, from bottom, after "at every step," change comma for full stop.

„ 12, „ 6, insert comma after "developing it."

„ 27, „ 18, insert full stop after "often even now."

„ 34, „ 14, for "direction" read "directing."

„ 47, „ 9, insert comma after the words "of every part."

„ 59, „ 15, insert comma after the words "and uncared for."

„ 81, „ 9, for "become" read "becomes."

„ 104, „ 13, for "in" read "of."

„ 104, „ 15, for "hath" read "had."

„ 106, „ 1, for "water" read "waters."

„ 124, „ 2, for "send" read "sent."

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THE RAINBOW ROUND
THE THRONE;

OR,

Service and its Motive Power.

BY S. HANCOCK.

LONDON:
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1857.

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PATERNOSTER-ROW.

AND, BEFORE, A THORPE WAS
 SET IN HEAVEN, AND ONE WAS OF
 THE THORPE. AND THE GREAT WAS
 WAS TO LOOK UPON LIKE A
 JASPER AND A SARDINE STONE.
 AND THERE WAS A RAINBOW
 ROUNDED ABOUT THE THORPE, IS
 SIGHT LIKE THAT OF A CROWNED.

REV. IV. 2, 3.

REMARKS.

To my dear brothers and sisters in the one family of faith, I offer these few thoughts on our common service and its motive power, knowing that I can but aim to stir up their pure minds by way of remembrance, as I may be allowed to do ; and trusting that they will not despise the broken, yet rejoicing words of a young child of the household, who, not many years since, hated the Son of God with all the intense bitterness of *conscious* hatred ; and who would now lay some simple offering at His feet,—as a confession of faith in His name—a tri-

bute of thanksgiving for His love and grace.

May He render nugatory what error may be in these simple remarks ; and, for the rest, if any who read them, only feel the quiet gladness and strength I have felt in writing them, I shall be content.

A CONSECRATION TO SERVICE.

TEN years to-night—since first I cried to Thee,
And heard Thee answer ! Since the seal of heaven
Was stamped upon my life's deep purpose, and
Avowed it as Thine own—Thy gift—beneath
Thy mystic guardianship for evermore.
The shy and silent thirst of song,—concealed
As though 'twere crime to others ;—the untamed
Impassioned search for knowledge ;—and the wild
And maddened struggles to unfold the thought
Imprisoned in my heart, whose trembling pride
Yet shrank from the unfolding,—and whose toils
Were yet all fruitless through Thy hand, because
They bore no fruit for Thee—all these were o'er.
Ah no ! not all ! for though Thou drewest then
Me and my purpose both into Thy hands,
And gave a full and set development—
A power and definiteness to my dream,—
It had not else possessed,—I knew it not.

vi A CONSECRATION TO SERVICE.

Mine eyes were dim, and I could scarce perceive
The leadings of Thy grace ;—and painful years
Of sharp experience and discipline,
Were needed still to raise my purpose to
Thy standard—to subdue my wayward will
To join with Thee in bearing out Thy gift.
Thy patience hath succeeded, Lord !—and now
My long apprenticeship seems nearly run :
Thou dost conduct me slowly to the field
Where it must be developed ; to the strife
In which it shall mature and live for Thee.
The pyre of holy or unholy toil
Seems now to reach its apex—and to-night
Is hallowed to the future ; an abyss
Which I must cross my mission to fulfil ;—
An unbridged gulf of time,—o'er which the past—
Its dreams and motives—ne'er must come again,
To mar or intercept my onward course.
I stand upon the gulf :—*one* backward glance
Upon the failures and the weakness of
My progress hitherto ;—of damp dismay
Upon the labours—Oh ! how issueless
As yet, save here—all crushing though they were
To physical endurance,—and 'tis past !
Hence—hence must be *all* future !—and my heart
Shrinks from the vast and stern arena near,
Now opened to its wildered gaze ; and sinks

All prostrate at the portal. Have not I
Presumed too much, and aimed my shaft too high?
If I grew sick and faint, and nature flagged
In the lone, steadfast vigils of the past,—
How shall I dare this future? Is it not
A burden which shall be too great for me;—
A deep and dire responsibility
Too awful to endure; a world-wide strife
Which can but conquer me;—a slave's dark death
Unpitied and unheeded? Oh! No words
Contain the fathomless exhaustion of
My prostrate soul—how numbered and paralysed
Its every faculty—how powerless,
As held beneath a leaden mount to move!
My life—its purpose—seems already lost;
Crushed out in darkness, never more to rise!
How can I brave the combat, with this strange
And palsied nervelessness—Oh! Had I not
Best pause upon the threshold, and recede
Before I enter, and it be too late?
What! Turn and give up all?—and let the deep
Close o'er Thy gift—its treasure and its power,—
To drift on—silenced—aimless—through the
world,
And perish in its living catacomb,
Displaced and valueless? To leave no light,—

viii A CONSECRATION TO SERVICE.

No wide-spread fragrance of Thy love and Thee ;—
To die and leave my mission unfulfilled ;—
My heavenly crown to one more meet ;—to die
And to have lived in vain ?—Oh ! Misery !
It must not—shall not be ! But how—will not
The strife o’ermaster me ? I need not try.
Thou who hast given, wilt protect the gift
Thou hast developed, to subserve Thy will.
Thou who hast guided me wilt guide me still ;—
Wilt clear my path before me, and wilt hold
My trembling footsteps through all obstacles
Which threaten to o’erwhelm. I rest on Thee—
My Father—helper of my helplessness.
Thou know’st my frame, and Thou rememberest
That I am dust. Thou wilt apportion me
My daily need for daily task,—no more
Than I can bear or do. It is enough.
I enter, leaning on Thy faithful word,
“ Even as thy day is, so thy strength shall be.”
I enter—
.
. . . . Life hath opened to my view
In strange and wondrous beauty ; and I drink
Fresh draughts of new-found peace at every step,
I breathe a higher, freer atmosphere :
My soul is unentangled, cloudless now ;

No past doth hold—no present overcome.
My path holds but one purpose now, and I
Pursue that only: and I find new strength—
Unwarped and undivided—as I pass
Amid its stern realities,—new light
To radiate its gloom and pleasure toil.
Oh! I do thank Thee, Father, that Thy love
Hath nerved my faltering step to enter here!

THE
RAINBOW ROUND THE THRONE.

CHAPTER I.

THE BOW OF THE COVENANT.

“ And, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne. And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone : and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald.”—REV. IV. 2, 3.

THERE are many phases of God's relationship and position, as towards His people and towards the earth, revealed in the Scriptures. This passage represents one of them. Whether regarded as to

2 THE BOW OF THE COVENANT.

the place it occupies with respect to events subsequently revealed, or to the aspect it bears towards them, the light it throws upon them, and the lessons it teaches out of them, it is a remarkable one ; and it is not the less remarkable because of its antecedents.

The first thing in the above description which rivets our attention, though the last mentioned, is the Rainbow. It is spoken of so often in the Word—we see it so often in the visible firmament—that the eye welcomes it as a familiar thing, now that it is represented “round about the throne.” Thus forming, as it would seem, the jewelled canopy of the throne—the gorgeous boundary of the holy of holies,—we enter through the glittering emerald splendour of its stupendous arch into the presence-chamber of the throne and Him who sits thereon, with the myriads of holy creatures who form His attendants there. As “the secret of the

Lord is with them that fear Him, and He will show them His covenant," so the possession of that covenant is the key to the sealed "secret." The Rainbow is the only entrance to that presence-chamber.

We read of no rainbow before the deluge. Whether the natural laws on which it secondarily depends now had been held in abeyance till then, or were then framed to form it, we do not know: we only know that *it* was created *then*.*

It was a covenant with, or rather for, earth. "While the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night, shall not cease;" and, therefore, all who obeyed the command in replenishing and cultivating the earth put them-

* It has been questioned whether it was created then, or only consecrated—a spiritual meaning given to a natural phenomenon already existing.

4 THE BOW OF THE COVENANT.

selves under the blessing of it. And those who, when the cloud was brought over the earth, looked upon the bow, and believed what God had said, that the waters of a flood should no more destroy the earth,—would they not be likely to believe also what Noah had learnt, and could teach them, that “the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent’s head”?

Well has God kept that covenant. Through all the convulsions of earth, He has not forgotten it. Though man has forsaken it, to gather into cities, it is ever before Him. Though the covenant with earth was also a covenant with Noah and his posterity “to perpetual generations,” it did not depend upon man. It was built upon a covenant that had gone before it. It formed part of that previous covenant, and was included in it. The rainbow encircled both, for both were but one. That covenant was with

the Son of God, and its first outgoing was God's promise to Eve.

Nearly four hundred years after the deluge, we read of the re-stating of that first covenant in the covenant of grace with Abraham: "the covenant that was confirmed before of God in Christ Jesus," which the law, given "four hundred and thirty years after, could not disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect;" being simply "added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made:" "that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ." Of Him, as typified by David, God says, "If ye can break my covenant of the day, and my covenant of the night, and that there should not be day and night in their season; then may also my covenant be broken with David my servant." And the terms of the covenant with Him and His people were these:—

6 THE BOW OF THE COVENANT.

“ I will make Him my first-born, higher than the kings of the earth.

“ His seed also will I make to endure for ever, and His throne as the days of heaven.

“ If His children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments ;

“ If they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments ;

“ Then will I visit their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes.

“ Nevertheless, my loving-kindness will I not utterly take from Him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail.”

And the terms on His side were, “ and He shall bear their iniquities ;” and, by obeying, redeem them from the curse of the broken law.

Yes ! It is because “ He was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification,” that we are received, and chastened, and blessed, as

children; “and if children, then heirs.” And as touching the covenant, “neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

The rainbow, then, is the boundary line. It divides the children of God from the world without. It is the wall of the fold into which they are brought. It is the eternal safety and keeping of an eternal covenant. It is a symbol above man—it is a reality before God,—encircling the throne, and all who belong to that throne.

But there is also something more included in this covenant; “A seed shall serve Him.” “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”

Here, also, the rainbow is the line

of demarcation. *Without* that line can be *no* true service. The fold has not been entered; the first step, faith, has not been taken; and all attempts at service, not being of faith, must necessarily be of sin. “*Whatsoever* is not of faith, is sin.” And “without faith it is *impossible* to please God.” None but the children of faith, the people of the covenant, can render true service,—service that the Father can delight in, through the blood and intercession of the Son, which have made that service acceptable to Him. Of *them*, service is not only required, it is *expected*.

Not only so, but every particle of even their service is placed in direct reference to the rainbow, and judged by its principles. And seen by the unerring light of that wondrous arch—as it shines forth in the Cross—how much of the brightest saintly service, in its hidden motive, its secret workings, belongs to the world without; how little could enter, uncon-

sumed, the sanctuary of the covenant; how little *will* enter there!

And yet how seldom we stop to consider if our service be *real* service. So that it be fair before the world or the Church, we do not inquire if it be fair also before God: so that it *seem* service, we do not ask whether He judges it as such: so it be given to God, it is too much trouble to search whether He *owns* it or not.

Thus we go on, serving and yet not serving. It should not be so. With His will before us, and His Spirit to teach us in it, it should not be so. Let us henceforth seek that our service may be such as He will own in the day when the secrets of all hearts shall be made manifest,—and the approbation of mere appearances before the world will matter as little to us now as then. We shall be truly of those who “rest from their labours, and their works do *follow* them.”

CHAPTER II.

THE SEVEN GOLDEN CANDLESTICKS.

“ He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches.”—REV. III. 22.

THE Son of man had fulfilled His part of the covenant. The appointed sacrifice had been offered “once for all;” and He was ascended to heaven, to “make intercession for the transgressors;” and to wait the gradual gathering of the first-fruits of the travail of His soul. That gathering had begun.

The pure and holy seed He had sown in the earth, as the Saviour and Teacher,—the little Church, so redeemed by His blood, so marvellously gifted and empowered by the Holy Ghost,—was becoming, amidst all its unsparing persecutions, a

great one. It had spread from city to city, from nation to nation, and had rooted itself wherever a world-driven, but God-sustained Christian fled for refuge, or sealed his faith by his blood. But it had already lost its character. Other elements—elements not of heaven—had entered into its organization, and it was changed. Satan had sown the tares, and those tares had begun to spring up, to grow on among the wheat until the end. The apostles had already had to weep over and rebuke many a growing evil and heresy and fall. They had passed away in martyr glory; but the evils they bewailed had grown stronger and more flourishing, more *cherished* in the Church. John, of all the apostle band, alone remained. He—in his patient faithful exile—saw and knew it all; and his saintly heart was troubled over the things which polluted the Church, and which the Holy Ghost had, even then, revealed should

prosper yet more and more, until their final judgment from the hand of God. And his right appreciation of, and humiliation for, the changing and darkening of the Church, and the principles daily developing in it brought—as in the case of Daniel—their blessing from Him who is ever “nigh such as are of a broken and contrite spirit.” To him, the beloved disciple, was given the revelation of what was, and what should be hereafter;—and the commission to impart what was given him to the Church, as its beacon and witness down through the dim vista of the long and darkening future. History can only echo what the Saviour had foretold—how the Church has regarded that witness and that warning.

Accordingly, in the first vision which John receives, the Son of Man is walking among the seven golden candlesticks,—the churches; not as “the Lamb that was slain,” but as the Searcher, the Wit-

ness, the Judge. The head and hair are white, like snow, to weigh all things, not according to the measure of yearning sympathy with human weakness, but according to that of His own holiness. The eyes are as a flame of fire, to consume, as well as behold;—and the feet of fine brass, denoting not only his own personal incorruptibility, but that He was walking *amidst corrupted* things, and *had need* to *show* His power of being proof against defilement. The only symbol which would *appear* to pertain to the gentler nature of the Son of man is that of “the countenance as the sun,”—but we must remember that He is essentially “the sun of righteousness,” and that the day is not yet come when He “shall arise with healing in His wings.” It is, too, “as the sun shining in his strength,” and we all know the power of the tropic meridian sun, to manifest the hidden evils of all dark places, and develop

the germs of all noxious things. And connecting this with the preceding symbols of His person, would it not represent Him as bearing the same aspect towards the Churches—of searching and judging things thus tacitly avowed, even before verbally acknowledged, as evil? No wonder, then, that John fell at His feet as dead, and that he needed to be touched and endued with new spirit-power to be enabled to hear all that the Holy One had chosen to reveal to him, or even to listen without heart faintness to His preparatory dealing with the Churches—in authoritative praise, where praise could be given; blame, warning, denunciation, and final promise to those who overcame. Ah! He speaks to the Churches collectively: the promise is only *individual*,—"to *him* that overcometh." He knew, and had foretold, that but few would enter the strait gate; that among the countless numbers of His professed dis-

ciples, there would be but few whom He could own as His.

All these things considered, it might seem strange, but in remembrance of the eternal grace of God's dealings with His own, only well and fitting, that the fearful sins and visitations which form the greater part of his revelation of the future should be prefaced by the unalterable assurance of blessing to the Church,—“ Grace be unto you, and peace, from Him which was, and which is, and which is to come.”

Tribulation in the world was ever the lot of His people,—unavoidable from their position in the world, and appointed, that they might not love the world too well to keep their right position in it. But He knew that there were to be times when those tribulations should be greater and heavier to bear; when the storms of Christian life should be more numerous, and its conflicts more crushing; and it

was well and kind to preface the record of those tribulations, and to stay their souls in them, by the sweet benediction of peace from Him—the unchanging—just as the word “peace” seemed blotted from their vocabulary.

He knew, too, that from that time down to the end of the age, the visible Church would rapidly deteriorate to be far, far more fallen and corrupted than it was then; that it would fearfully depart from the faith and pure doctrine once committed to it; that it would be mingled with the multiplied and inextricable confusions and sophistries of the world, until right knowledge and true faith would be nearly lost; and was it not fitting, in anticipation of that time, to lead it back to the primary principle, the foundation-stone of its salvation, the simplicity of its first faith—GRACE?—and to proclaim that same grace as free and unchanged as ever to them, through Him

who was and is, "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever?"

And not only so, but to teach it that while in the world the very name of Christ should be ignored by its governmental systems, His will seem contravened, His kingdom supplanted, and His purposes subverted,—He is truly God's King, waiting upon the Father's throne, until His enemies be made His footstool; and that, however the kings of the earth may rage, He is actually Prince of them all, —Master of the one they obey; and, in proclaiming this truth, to give to those who receive and welcome it some portion of the foretaste of blessing pronounced upon those who read and understand,—*rest* in that sovereignty, loving remembrance that He has made *them*, too, kings and priests to God, and the joy of being able to pour out, from released and unburdened hearts, the exulting ascription

to Him of glory and dominion for ever and ever.

And while He knew that there should be, even in that perilous time, some whom His love should keep resting upon *grace*, and seeking to serve Him in the power of that grace,—He saw, too, that their hearts would grow sick and weary in waiting for the promise made so long ago, and apparently so far beyond all probability of being fulfilled; until they would begin to wonder whether the world and the rest of the Church were not right,—that the Lord would never come at all,—that all things would continue as they were from the beginning. Was it not just that, reaching forth to that time, the Lord Jesus should cheer and sustain the waiting ones, and sternly warn the careless and unbelieving, by testifying of the great prophetic truth, “Behold, I come;”—that, though His coming was long delayed,

when He did come, He would "come quickly;" and that He would graciously listen to the response of those whom His own love had made ready for Him; "Even so, Amen."

There is nothing disguised or softened in these three chapters. All is unmitigated, uncompromising reality. Grace, the first motion of God's heart towards fallen man, and its manifestation in the Cross—and peace, the inalienable possession of all who are built upon that grace,—the great but invisible fact of the Son's present kingship in the Church, and virtual dominion over the earth, and the incessant theme of prophecy, His second advent—not inferior, in effect, to the first, but secondary, from the priority and essential causality of the latter;—these stand out in clear, bold relief against the records and principles of the world, like a tall beacon-rock against the dark, deepening, fiery grey of a winter's sunset sky, around

whose head the storm-cloud whirls its power,—at whose feet the sullen and lashing waves spend their fury, and all in vain. So, against this steadfast witness, this wondrous chord of truths, earth and hell have joined issue, from the moment of its enunciation. Philosophy (falsely so called) has insidiously undermined it, worldliness ridiculed it, infidelity madly rebelled against it—all as vainly. It remains, for life and for death, as first promulgated—uneffaced, ineffaceable.

In relief not less strong, in type not less clear and burning, are developed the distinctive characteristics and conflicts of the churches. No false alarm of imaginary evils, no soothing flattery of imaginary good, proceeds from these archives of eternal truth. In each Church, the nature of the graces, if any, still in exercise, is precisely marked; the evils which peculiarly assail them, and predominate among them; the exact kind of conflict

they should maintain against those evils ; the grace and strength needed, and ready to be imparted ; how much of that conflict they do maintain, if they maintain any ; and how far the proffered grace and wisdom and strength are accepted or abandoned ; and the nature of the crown finally awaiting all who overcome in their sphere of trial and temptation ;—all are clearly set forth, indelibly engraven, that none of the churches might mistake their position, character, and warfare,—and so mistaking them, blinded to what was, and assuming what was not, wander on, and become entangled in a labyrinth of error and mystery, fallen and more fallen, till the gathered truth which formed their focus of light should be departed, and their candlestick removed out of its place. It is not needed now to say whether or not this has been the case, and with more than the seven churches of Asia, to whom, primarily, the Apocalypse was sent.

Many Christians, while submissively content with the arrangement, have nevertheless wondered *why* those addresses to the seven churches should be included in a revelation mainly directed to what was "to be hereafter," without considering that this order was *necessary*. *Those who do not practically understand and realize the present, can never understand the future*; and *therefore* was it needed, that the churches should be faithfully instructed in the *present*, so as to be prepared for the wise reception of the stupendous future.

That it was possible for the Church to become blind and deaf to warning so faithful, instruction so decisive, is proved by the address to Laodicea. That Church had *already* become blinded to the present—the world's and its own. It had ceased to testify or fight against evil, and therefore we read of no persecution *there*. Those who composed it were settled down

comfortably among earthly things, and sought their chief good and pleasure in them. The Saviour was neglected (so soon!) and His cross became an unvalued thing. God's estimate of *sin* was therefore annulled, and thus they thought themselves rich, and in need of nothing, and their real character was to them an ignored and forgotten thing, unknown and uncared for. Earthly pride was to them a covering of the eyes, and with such an estimate of themselves and the world, as to the present, was it likely they could comprehend the future about to be revealed to them, as being other than mere visions, of no import and no value? Was it strange that the Great Revealer, before He unfolded it, should counsel them first of all to anoint their eyes with eyesalve that they might see?

And yet, even there, the power of the Rainbow overshadowed all who had taken hold on its blessed covenant. It enclosed

24 THE SEVEN GOLDEN CANDL

them still. And the gentle w
them, "As many as I love, I re
chasten," was not without g
strength to those who might seek
the command, "Be zealous *there*,
repent."

CHAPTER III.

MISSION AND MOTIVE.

"If any man serve Me, him will my Father honour."—JOHN XII. 26.

It was done. The messages to the seven Churches had been fully delivered, painful though they were. That part of John's mission among the Churches had been fulfilled, and now, as regarded them individually, it was ended. He had done with it for ever. The steward had been found faithful in the troubled part assigned him, and now he was to be raised to a higher, more extensive, and more glorious sphere of service.

It is ever so. The Christian may gather an important lesson from this.

Each child of God, whether high or low, in the household, the Church, or the world, has his sphere of action, his peculiar *work*, allotted him. There is no need to doubt *what* that sphere or work may be. The sphere he is obviously placed in; as for the work, if it be at all doubtful, there is the answer of wisdom for the asking, and the Spirit's guidance for the waiting.

And that work, whatever it may be, if it be done *at once*, with a willing mind and a ready hand, without murmurings or disputings, without carelessness or drawing back, when it *is* done, it is done with for ever—it is finished. There is no chastening in it, though there may and must be discipline; no compulsion, no reluctant retracing of steps, no gloom of heart, no restless whisperings and uneasy looking back of conscience. The work is done, and the reward is sure: the saint, besides, possessing through all the strength-giving

assurance that he is a co-worker with God, that he is following in the footsteps of Him who said, "I have finished the work which Thou gavest me to do ;" and therefore having fellowship with Him, like Paul, who also followed Him, and could say, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith ;" and the happy feeling that "God *loveth* the cheerful giver," and that the *willing* sacrifice is doubly accepted ; that his ready obedience has honoured God, and that God will honour him, and manifest Himself to him in maintaining his service,—and will exalt him to a higher and still higher sphere of labour, when He comes to judge among His people—often even now "He that is faithful in little will be faithful also in much ;" and He proves it by saying to the wise servant, "Thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things."

It has been contended that the aspiring for such distinction is pride, that such motive is presumption,—that both are bare, unmitigated selfishness; yet it is not so. It is an unchangeable principle of humanity, a thing inherent in the nature of a created being; and as such, instead of being rebuked, is constantly encouraged and appealed to in the Scriptures. Punishment and reward are powerful engines in human governments, especially the latter; and could it be thought that a government so essentially and perfectly *human* as that of God's King, the Son of man, should be without the most powerful and blessed of the two; should be conducted only on the principle of punishment, or of indiscriminate and irresponsible indulgence? Such indulgence is not true kindness, any more than it is in families. It is *not* grace, and forms no part of the system of grace.

Christians, in their anxious zeal to

controvert the Popish error respecting works, often wander into the opposite mistake, forgetting that the surest antidote to error is the truth that error was perverted from. And though it is a great truth,—*the* truth which forms the glory and rejoicing of the child of God for ever, that salvation is only, entirely of *grace*, that he is nothing, and can be nothing in himself, and that all he is, or ever will be, is of free grace,—yet it is no less true that God, whether in His relation as Creator, King, or Father, deals with the world, the nations, and the Church, by the same principle of justice He Himself implanted in humanity, wherewith to judge of right and wrong; and which, darkened and perverted as it may be in fallen nature, still commends itself to the conscience. As Creator, He has ordained certain universal laws for the physical being of His creatures, from observance or non-observance of which shall accrue health or

disease, strength or weakness. As King, He has framed certain rules, on obedience or non-obedience to which depend the progress or retrogression, the blessing or curse, of the nations. As Father, among His children, with whom He deals only in grace, it is an invariable rule that to those towards whom grace is exercised, there will also be given *grace in trust*; and for the use or neglect of this trusted grace, they are amenable to His pleasure or displeasure.

And while it is an indubitable fact that *faith* is the first step towards obedience, and that there can be *no* obedience, no service, without faith; yet that step once taken, faith once given, though nothing can affect the *standing* of a child of God, he is daily and hourly accountable for his obedience or non-obedience. The obedience will be rewarded, both here and hereafter; the disobedience will be punished *here*, and the lack of fruit which is its

natural consequence, will be a deprivation for ever, and most probably *lower* his position in the eternal world. It commends itself to our sense of right that it should be so. "Behold, He cometh, and His reward is with Him, to give to every man according as his work shall be." And while "other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, Christ Jesus;" yet, *having* built on that foundation, there is a day coming when *what* each Christian has built upon it shall be tried by fire.

"And if any man's work *abide* which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work be burned, he shall suffer loss, though he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire."

Furthermore, God has given each of His children a talent; to some five, to some ten, or more—but at any rate one—to use for His glory; and each is responsible for what he does with it. When the Lord comes "to try every man's work, of what sort it is," and finds that one, with

his talent, has gained ten talents more, will He not say, like as He represented Himself to say, "Well done, thou good servant, thou hast been faithful in a very little; have thou authority over ten cities;" and to the one who has gained five, "Have thou authority over five cities"? while to the "wicked and slothful servant," who buries his talent, or who, in mock humility, pleads as an excuse, "I did not know that *I*, so weak, and poor, and ignorant, had any talent," the sentence shall go forth, "To him who *hath* shall be given, and he shall have more abundantly; and from him that *hath not*, even that he hath shall be taken away from him."

And not only has every one his talent, and every talent its peculiar sphere of occupation, but each sphere of service has its own peculiar and distinct reward, appointed for those who seek grace to fill it worthily. Christians have not thought of this as they should. Enveloped in certain vague, misty ideas about heaven,

God's glory, bright angels clothed in white, playing on golden harps, &c., they have overlooked the fact that their nature will not be unhumanized there,—that this new life in them now is but the commencement of the same kind of life they shall possess in heaven. They have forgotten this, and so forgetting, have looked upon heaven-life as some mysterious kind of being, which they could form no definite idea of, but which their human nature must be crushed and rooted out to prepare them for,—and rightly enough, shudderingly recoiling from this terrific and uncalled-for ordeal, weary of attempting its impossibility, they have ended by neglecting the mortification of the *old* nature, the flesh, which *is* commanded. So forgetting, and so feeling, they have seen little or nothing in heaven's joys and rewards to claim affinity with their human nature; and therefore those joys and rewards have had but little comparative

power over their walk and life. Their life, as *human* life, has not been in them.

They will find, then, that those joys are suited and natural; the reward, a discriminate reward, which, while far above what eye can see, or heart conceive, will yet enter into their conceptions as being thoroughly appropriate—suited to their talent—answering to their souls' yearnings, and in perfect unison with its sympathies;—a reward which could fit no other sphere, no other bent of talent or spirit half so well. He who framed the spirit may well know how to fit His blessings to meet it.

Thus we read, that those who confess Jesus before men shall be confessed of Him before the Father and the angels; the watching servant shall rest, and his Lord come forth to serve him. The faithful servant shall enter into the joy of his Master. "He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a

prophet's reward. He that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward."

And "whosoever shall give to drink to one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in nowise lose his reward."

Can further proof be needed ?

And when we find Moses, who "counted the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt, for he had *respect* unto the *recompense* of *reward*," reckoned among those "of whom the world was not worthy;" when we look at the One above all,—He "who, *for the joy that was set before Him*, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is now set down at the right hand of God," shall we refuse to believe that the Word sanctions and upholds the principle so fixed in the human constitution, of striving to gain promised rewards ?

No ! Knowing that we were saved by grace ; that “ it is God who worketh in us to will and to do of His own good pleasure ; ” and that the talents themselves, and the rewards promised, are still but the free gifts of our Father’s love to His little children, to fix their wandering affections still more upon Him,—let us also strive to use the gifts He has given us,—the things He Himself works in us,—for His purpose in giving them—His own glory. Let us serve Him for His great love to us, and even covet earnestly those gifts and those rewards which shall but fit us for greater service and greater love ; sure, that while we do so, though “ we have nothing that we have not received,” and are therefore but unprofitable servants, He will smile upon us in gentlest fellowship, and say, “ Well done, good and faithful servants ! ” And *His* praise, even were all other reward wanting, will not that be reward enough ?

His praise—

That enters into the other motive of actions,—the aspiring—the love of fame—the seeking to win honour—the striving for glory. Many hearts which nothing else could touch, no other reward could move, are satisfied with this. It is what they live for—their master passion. And it is a great passion. It dwells not with the many; and though, therefore, not the most universal, it is the most dominant, and the most insatiable; and as those in whom it rules are usually the *few*—the *gifted*—those to whom is given the direction and fashioning the world's energies—it is well it is so.

But many Christians in whom it exists, remembering God's denunciations of the proud, and exaltation of the lowly,—and deeming themselves fallen into the condemnation of the devil, have struggled in bitterness and humiliation to crush its

power, and trample out its shining ;—sometimes, in weakness and fear, to find themselves mastered by this, as they conceive it, their besetting sin ; or if they succeed in their faltering efforts, and resolutely forego it, to find that their human light is extinguished,—that human life holds no motive power, no spring nor beauty, nothing to engage them more. In their feeling of incapacity for almost all other service—their mourning uselessness before their God—their paralyzation of energy,—earthly life has seemed to them a weary, darkened thing, which they would as soon exchange for the calm sleep of the grave, but that they seek submission to the will of God.

They have erred. Earthly pride has had, doubtless, a place in their passion, yet they have, nevertheless, erred.

Most Christians, indeed, have looked upon fame as an earthly thing, with objects and rewards simply earthly : and

yet many, thinking so—and deeming the fairer aspects of the world to be fair also in the sight of God,—have considered it no sin to seek that earthly fame in its earthly objects, and have, therefore, thrown their whole lives into its pursuit. Others, with the same idea of fame,—seeing that wickedness is throned upon the high places of the earth—that evil, fair but deadly, triumphs and riots in the world's systems—that truth is trampled down with deliberate indifference, and its light made a mark for mocking and contempt,—can see no legitimacy in the yearning for fame, no sphere in which it may be rightly sought,—and have, therefore, striven to quell down its strong life into utter inaction. Thus, while the one has spent his gifts upon earthly things, and joined hands with the world—God's enemy—to contravene the truth, and neutralize its power, while he imagined himself advancing it—and built upon the

foundation the wood, hay, stubble, which shall be burned in the day of the Lord;—the other has *buried* his talent,—quenched a light that came from, and would, therefore, have burned still in, the sanctuary of God—crushed a living power that was given to make him a way-mark of influence, both here and hereafter,—and has thus wrought for himself shame instead of glory.

And this,—the looking on fame as *only* an earthly reward in earthly objects—the idea that God had no peculiar honour to form an aim for the gratification of their ruling passion—and the, therefore, seeking that gratification in the honour which cometh from man,—has been their error and their sin.

It is not so.

Fame is quite as prominent a principle in God's government as in man's. Not that the two are parallel, but that the one has certain intrinsic qualities which

make it, in certain cases, *typical* of the other. As an earthly state places most trust and value on those, who, turning from its lower rewards—its emoluments—aspire to its honorary distinctions, so does God, on the same class in His kingdom; and His Word continually holds forth inducements to win and fix them in their right places in His state. What does the earthly aspirant seek? Is it not the praise of his generation—a prominent remembrance in the records of his country—an immortal name? Does not God meet that yearning in the Christian by the assurance that “the righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance?” Does not Jesus appeal to that motive—though most certainly *not* as *the* motive of their service—where He counsels His disciples not to glory even in service which may be successful here, but in the immortal fame which should be theirs hereafter? “Notwithstanding, in this rejoice not, that the

spirits are subject unto you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven."

And lest it might be thought, that as this was true of *all* believers—no *distinction* is implied in any case, is not that peculiar distinction included in the promise, "to them who, by patient continuance in well doing, *seek* for *glory, honour, and immortality*—eternal life"? The glory, honour, and immortality they seek, shall be an eternal life for them in Christ Jesus. Still more marked is the distinction of honour, in the words of the glorious One who spake to Daniel on the banks of Hiddekel,—“They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament: and they that turn many to righteousness *as the stars for ever and ever.*”

Thus the wise are honoured above the foolish; and they who have carried into practical life the wisdom given them, are the stars even among the wise.

Yes! The love of fame is quite as legitimate in the Christian, under God's system, as it is in the worldling under his system; but the fame which God's government giveth *is not of earth*. It lays no claim to earth's fame, though the latter may, in some rare cases, be added to it. Its instincts are diverse and separate. Its motives are heavenly, and its aims eternal. Its praise is from God. Its remembrance is in the archives of heaven; and its immortality before the hosts of heaven, and before the Lamb, who died to give them that immortality, and all its holy impulses.

Let the earth-born, then, seek fame—the fame which perishes in the seeking—in the earth; it is his sphere, his only one. But let the heaven-born who seeks fame, seek it in the new creation to which he belongs—the kingdom in which his citizenship should be—in heaven.

It should be remembered, however,

once for all, that the love of fame, whatever it may be to the worldling, is not a *life*, and that the Christian would be in sin to cultivate it as such. It is not a life, nor the outgoings of life. Jesus Christ, the new life in Him, is the one, and the various talents held from Him, determine the other.

Still, it is most certain, that this aspiring, as He has ordained it, is a most powerful stimulus,—not to the life, but to that life's earthly developments—to direct and cultivate those developments in their service to right aims for their sphere in the future: and it is as certain that those talents would flag—though they could not fail utterly—and their efforts be greatly paralyzed, without it. Those who seek fame rightly, seek it simply as what He intended it to be—as a greater power of serving Him among others, and a more extensive means of bringing glory to Him,—thus making service its own reward.

And He, who so evidently, by His encouraging and working on it, *implanted* that great stimulus—the craving for fame—has He not also ordained *definite* rewards of glory for its several distinct aims ;—has He not fixed a sphere of *action* as well as of being, through perseverance in which those honours may be attained ?

Surely, yes !

What is the sphere ? Is it only a heavenly one, or must it be reached through an earthly medium ?

We may see that though it is quite true that every believer is one of a “royal priesthood,” it is as true that, as the “body is not one member, but many,” “there are differences of administrations,” and “diversities of operations.” “To one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom ; to another the word of knowledge, by the same Spirit.” And “God hath set some in the Church, first apostles ; secondarily, prophets ; thirdly,

teachers ; after that, miracles, then gifts of healing, helps, governments, diversities of tongues."

And He who gave those gifts, so fitted for earth's purposes, surely He has not intended them to slumber in uselessness *here*, where they are so needed ? Is there not an earthly sphere ?

Yes, two, which are yet but one.

The world, in carrying forth the Gospel, and gathering out of it those who are to be gathered ;—and the Church, to which those gifted ones are given, "for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ ;" till all are "come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."

This, then, is the sphere—this is the mission ; a glorious one, worthy of the named of God ; and in some of the hun-

dred ways of which, old and young, male and female, bond and free, can join, more or less, and as may be given them; and from which none can be shut out without loss to the whole body,—which, from Christ, “fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.”

Yes! Many a Christian—having perception of the truth, and urged on by the pressure of the high principle dominant within him—has sought to throw his little weight into the scale; at the same time, in his self-humiliation, despairing of results from efforts *so* small, so puny, and almost reproaching himself for making such an important business of his trivial labours, when God could *so* well do without them—could carry out the same purpose just as well if he were not. And does he not

rejoice to remember then that what God can do without is no question at all to him,—that He choses to employ him, and therefore chooses to need him. He is a member of the Church—the body—and, therefore, *the body* cannot do without him; and as *regards that body*, he is a *necessary* link in the vast chain of God's eternal purposes.

Every member is needful to the body; but if all are needful, how much more so those whom God has appointed to the more direct communication and diffusion of life—gifted with greater power to receive and impart truth? And those to whom is committed, under God, the guidance and government, the secret or open fashioning of the Church, in their respective spheres;—placed, as they are, in a position of such high and terrible responsibility,—with all the weakness of their human nature, and the temptations with which Satan and the world are sure

to assail such,—how shall they meet that which is required of them? Since, “if a man strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned except he strive lawfully,” does not God fit them for their charge by teaching and discipline, further and deeper than what are needed by the Church as a whole?

Surely He does.

It is the great characteristic of the Word of God, that it is so based on essential and immutable principles as to be universal,—and yet it bears on the individual as if meant for him only. Therefore, while there are obvious rules for the strong-handed and peremptory guidance of the tyro in any especial branch of service,—there are, as in earthly professions, deep, and subtile, and delicate mysteries relating to that branch which all cannot penetrate; and without which the service, whatever it be, will be rugged

and unfinished,—will present only violent contrasts and want of harmony, like a painting in which the soft gradations of light and shade are neglected, and keeping is forgotten.

Thus the aphorism “He that ruleth among men should be just, ruling in the fear of the Lord;” and the exhortation “he that ruleth, with diligence,” are authoritatively simple. But justice and activity, alone, are harsh and repelling. And when, a step further, he *realises* what before he only *knew*,—that he has to “watch over souls as they that must give account, that they might do it with joy and not with sorrow,” it is only then that he feels the perplexities of his position: how the justice, untempered, graduates into severity, and thence into wrong, which preys on the conscience and temper of the ruler, and gnaws into the heart of the ruled;—how, if relaxed, it falls into weakness and inefficiency, still more un-

dermining and mischievous;—how the activity, under such circumstances, becomes a burden—a weary and heart-aching task—from which he would gladly be relieved;—and how impossible it is to “give account with joy” at all, in such a case.

And while thus experiencing that those “who watch for iniquity, and make a man an offender for a word,” are as offensive to man as to God,—with what winning significance the sweet persuasion, “Love as brethren, be *pitiful*, be *courteous*,” insinuates itself into his grieved and chafing spirit, soothing and preparing it for another step—the gentle authority of “The servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle to all men, apt to teach, *patient*.”

“Even,” as the Apostle of the Gentiles declares, “Even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be

saved;" directing all rulers in the Church henceforth to follow him in this, even as he followed Christ.

Then, in proportion to his docility and obedience, is he led, step by step, further and deeper, into acquaintance with the secret principles and machinery of God's government, and the wondrous simplicity of their *human adaptation* in the life of God's Anointed, both as the Ruler and the Servant; and as he learns by degrees to frame his own rule by its side, so does he become what a ruler should be.

Somewhat similar is it, in their sphere, with those who wield the human spring of influence,—more quiet, but not less powerful, than direct rule—and, often blended with it,—teaching—by the tongue or the pen.

God generally commences with such, by calling them to the vocation He intends for them, with an influence so still, yet so irresistible, that for them "all

nature has but one voice, and that is trumpet-tongued." He then begins their actual training for it, by teaching them their *ignorance*, and causing them to cry to Him for wisdom, which He giveth "liberally, and upbraideth not." Then, as "the fear of the Lord is the *beginning* of wisdom," so "the wise of heart will receive commandment,"—will "hear and increase learning." Thus directed towards the appointed use of what is given him from the One who is God's wisdom as well as His power, he is ordered, "Study to show thyself approved of God, a workman who needeth not to be ashamed, *rightly dividing the Word of truth*,"—to "bring out of his treasures things new and old."

And he is guided how to obey, as he is thus sent forth into practical life. While he, perhaps, stands hesitating as to his exact path of labour—half-deceived by some specious one which earth and his

own wayward imaginativeness present to him, God leads him on another step,—from *directions* to *principles*,—such as—

“If any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble”:—

Showing him how the “stubble” may be compared to those works and doctrines of false philosophy, which build only on earth’s wisdom, and therefore err from the faith, those of “foolish and unlearned questions, which gender strifes;” and those of mere fiction, with no aim at all, but that of earth-pleasing;—all utterly worthless—utterly condemned:—how the hay, “grass, and the flower thereof,” represent mere earthly beauty; and the wood, that moral usefulness so fair in the sight of man, and so right in its place, but which, *apart from truth*, is so delusive and so worthless;—and how both the wood and the hay may grow busily in the earth, in a vain attempt to meet earth’s tempo-


rary expedencies—vain even if earth were all—and utterly unfit to meet the exigencies of that great day of trial.

Showing him how, on the other hand, the precious stones typify the Christian graces; and how moral usefulness, absorbed into the truth, becomes the costly emerald of sympathy;—how, while those priceless gems which form a tiara of glory for the brow of Him who gives them, are gracing and enriching this dark world, even in their rough mortal caskets, He wills that each stone be fixed in its place, in a setting of pure gold—heavenliness—so that the perfect and genial lustre in which they are embedded, shall bring out the separate light of each, in a distinct yet blending blaze of brightness; and commands also that, while they thus accomplish their sacred mission, they be ever guarded on a shrine of silver—entire separateness from the world—lest the world's defilements

approach too near, and cast a shade over their pure glory.

Having shown him these things, He sets it before him, which of the two divisions he will choose. If he incline toward the former, or has already built works upon it, He sets him the solemn alternative,—if he will win the glory of self-consecration, by himself destroying them; or if he will win shame by having them destroyed for him in the day of the Lord :—and woe to him if, when God would guide him by His eye, he is like the horse or the mule, which have no understanding, for bit and bridle shall surely come near to him ;—woe to him, if he *will* take those holy things, and give them to dogs, or cast those precious pearls before swine.

But if he be obedient and *single-eyed*, there is no depth which human mind *may* fathom, that he may not be led into ; nothing *revealed* that may not be made



known unto him. "Henceforth I call you not servants, but friends; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth, but all things whatsoever I have received of my Father I have made known unto you. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you."

And so he is led on and on, to the mysteries of God's wisdom—there is no promise of *man's*—till the word is becoming fulfilled, "The man of understanding shall attain unto dark counsels."

But knowledge and wisdom in themselves, as human, are cold and separate, and work pride. They lead to sin against the brethren by haughty exclusiveness, and by trampling on the weaker consciences of others. It is not till bitter experience has taught him that he "knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know," that "knowledge puffeth up," and that "a haughty spirit is before a fall," that he learns to think soberly of

himself—to turn to his great Exemplar, and see that even as He, God's Teacher, "came not to be ministered unto, but to minister," so should he also strive to "please his neighbour for his good to edification;" that if He—the Sinless One—is "not an high priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities,"—how much more should *he* seek grace to "have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity."

Thus gradually conducted into the inner principles of God's teaching, he is taught, not only to know, but to use that knowledge for others; not only to teach, but to teach rightly, in gentleness and meekness, until is fulfilled in him that which the Word declares, "The lips of the righteous feed many" and "disperse knowledge;" "the law of the wise is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death."

And so, using his gifts in the appointed

path, he learns, in loving intercourse with the poorer, the less gifted, that God's estimate of deeds is not as man's ;—that many whom the world, and perhaps the Church, never heard of—who never dreamt of fame, and certainly never sought it,—will be ranked higher in that empyrean list than some who have dwelt upon the tongues of saints for generations. He finds, too, that while, perhaps, those of his labours on which he set most value, most *human* reliance, may be little looked upon by God,—some little word, sent forth in trembling and weakness—overlooked and uncared for but rich in the heart's gushings forth of love—may grow and prosper exceedingly ; thus bringing him voluntarily into the sweet peace of the “lowest place,” there to live evermore in the spirit of Him who taught that the lowliness of the law of love is the spring and end of all true teaching, and developed

it in Himself, that all teachers among men should seek to be like Him.*

And the fame,—it is a *suited* fame—or it is no reward. We may not know *precisely* now what it may be, though God hath revealed to us by His Spirit what eye hath not seen nor ear heard—what He hath prepared for them that love Him. We may gather a hint from the diversity of rewards held out to the seven Churches. Thus while one should simply eat of the tree of life and be satisfied,—another, which had to maintain a harder strife, was to have the morning star, and with it, power over the nations to rule them with a rod of iron. While one, the principal part of whose bitter conflict seems

* Would not the foregoing remarks on the principles of rule and teaching apply in an especial manner to those whose sphere of labour is among children and young people?

to have been the upholding of truth in its doctrines, should still feed upon and explore the mysteries of eternal wisdom and counsel, in the hidden manna and the white stone with its secret name,—another, which had rested in simple faith and quiet patience, and had therefore passed lovingly through the battle in its “little strength,” should be a pillar in the temple of God, and have His name written upon it for ever. While the “few names” even in Sardis which had not defiled their garments, but who yet seemed to have borne but little fruit, should simply have their names confessed in heaven, and walk with Jesus in white,—those who overcame in the deadly and loathsome Laodicea—whose great sin was “pride and abundance of idleness”—should find their humble waiting and toil end in rest and exaltation for ever, in being seated with Jesus on His throne, and reigning with Him. So

sued is the reward to even the temptation which attends its seeking.

With such blessed and definite end in view, let those who seek fame, seek and find it in ministering to the poor, the sick, the ignorant, the little ones of the Shepherd's flock. Let them "press forward for the mark of the prize of their high calling of God in Christ Jesus," seeking to be "*temperate in all things*," as they who strive to obtain a crown knowing they do not strive *uncertainly*—though well aware that now, in these last days especially, have they need to use their gifts vigilantly and obediently; or else, after trying again and again whether they will be faithful to their charge or not,—God will take it from them, and give to others more faithful their mission and reward. "Hold fast that thou hast, that no man take thy crown."

And while they gain their wisdom

through discipline—through the Word of God being brought to bear in trial,—for such are ever the tried ones,—let them welcome experience so gained, and give themselves wholly to their appointed work, that their “profiting may appear unto all.” Humbly—trustfully—let them lay their gifts upon His altar, seeking grace to use them in patient understanding; for, though there are many who profess to be children of God, there are too few who strive to *serve* Him, for any who do so strive, to let *one* gift, however small, lie slumbering for want of skill to use it.

Thus gifted, and thus *sure* of their vocation, let them do so *freely*—not entangling themselves with the affairs of this life, while they fulfil its duties; for God Himself put the question, “Who goeth a warfare at any time at his own charges?”—and answered it by the injunction respecting earthly things, “Neither be ye of

doubtful mind," "for after all these things do the Gentiles seek, and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things. But *seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness*, and *all* these things shall be added unto you."

"Trust in the Lord, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed."

Aye, and let them do so in fearless rejoicing,—the rejoicing of love; for all they can do or be—all the honour and dignity their Lord may of His free grace confer upon them, in their service, faith, and patient hope,—shall but add more and yet more glory to Him they love, who gave and wrought it all in them, whose glory they seek in it all—or they sin—and whose is blessing and dominion for ever.

So serving, shall they win honour; so faithful in the present, shall they be raised to a sphere, whose higher honours

and greater powers of service shall bring yet more eternal glory to Him ; and from which their present lowly sphere shall be but a speck in the immeasurable distance, if seen at all—as he who has gained the summit of Ararat may look down upon the great plain from which he ascended, and see only the gorgeous pavement of sunlit clouds rolling beneath him.

How different would our service be if we realized all this ! We should not be then as we are now,—placed in some rank of labour—found careless and disobedient—taken out of it with stern chastening, and after a while placed back again, only to falter and fail, and incur more bitter chastening—till our Father ceases to try us, and takes away our service altogether, with the solemn rebuke, “Let him alone.” Or if not quite like this—if there be some attempt at obedi-

ence—it is so partial and wavering that it is as worthless, and our God can only say, as of old, “Ephraim is a cake not turned.”

Why is it so? Is it not that we have looked upon life's every step of service as bearing only upon temporal expediency instead of belonging to the future, and marking our position in eternity? Our pride has despised the motive power—the reward and honour—which God Himself holds out for us,—despised it as a motive power; and our pride has brought its own punishment in the humiliation of Laodiceanism.

Let us, instead, seek the spirit of the righteous servant, and the crown laid out for those who follow Him,—and the cross will be our glory, and not our shame, as it is now. Let us, too, have “respect unto the recompense of reward,”—and our service will not be what it is now. It

coldness and indefiniteness will pass away. It will be fervent, stedfast, and abiding. Let us, too, look at "the exceeding and eternal weight of glory," and our service will belong to the heaven where it is. We shall be transformed into its image.

CHAPTER IV.

THE HEAVENS OPENED.

"My Father worketh hitherto, and I work."

—JOHN V. 17.

"His servants shall serve Him, and they shall see His face, and His name shall be in their foreheads."—REV. XXII. 4, 5.

THE scene is changed.

John has done with individual things existing on the earth, and is called up to be shown the things that must be hereafter. The gates of glory are unfolded; the bright regions of heaven are divided before him, and he confronts a throne, and One seated on that throne—the Eternal. But he does not fall as one dead now. The flesh is annulled; he is in the Spirit. For a while he is there,

in his own heaven-home, as unclothed of earth—a perfected and glorified spectator. It must have been so, for we know that flesh and blood—unchanged—cannot look upon God and live. We read of no fear, no shrinking now. He gazes, in calm dauntlessness, on the fearful visions one by one unfolded before him, as one from whom the things they symbolized were afar off. And well he may feel so. He has nothing to do with them, further than to testify of them. They have nothing to do with those he loves. He knows that Jesus bore all judgment for His own, and that therefore there is no condemnation to those who are in Him. He had just seen the Son of man walking up and down the Church, among the seven golden candlesticks, denouncing and judging the evil there, and he could fall at His feet as one dead *then*—but now, that its judgment has passed, he knows that the visioned horrors of earth's future

have relatively nothing to do with the saint or the Church,—further than that, in due time, as he saw, the faithful, after suffering as their brethren had done before them, should share with them in the judicial victories of their Lord, the King of kings. He felt towards it all, as they will feel. He viewed even the last awful scenes, as they will view them,—taken up out of them,—placed high apart from them,—with the song of exultation, “Arise, Lord, and let thine enemies be scattered.” He but antedated them.

This vision is one of entire and unmingled blessing. Whatever the terrors of the revelation to be made—and they are such that their contemplation is crushing and exhausting even to those who are safe from them, and may well make the beaded drops stand forth upon the brow that ponders over them; whatever they may be, the first step to their revealing is the presence of the Enthroned

One—the Dweller in Light—full and perfect blessing. The first step is a foretaste of the last,—the eternal presence of God.

It is often so in the Word. A vision—an account—a word of blessing, often prefaces a long, long detail of sin and judgment,—as if to sustain the hearing soul in the patience of hope until the time of the final restitution of all things.

From the twenty-first to the twenty-fourth Psalms form an illustration of this. The Psalms are generally considered as each standing alone, entirely separate from the others. It may be so, but *is* it so? Is there no meaning nor connexion in the *order* in which they stand? May not that order contain principles and lessons important for us to know?


The twenty-first Psalm familiarly speaks of the power and majesty of the King of kings, when He comes forth to reign,

“conquering and to conquer.” The is the Psalm of the Cross ;—darkness death,—the bitter cup of wrath taken the Anointed, to save His people,—deep waters which might well make crown doubtful to the eye which cannot look through them to the light yond—the resurrection and the glory. The succeeding Psalm tells of the Anointed Victim as the Anointed Shepherd in a dispensation where there were wolves and thieves, and false hirelings, and therefore, need of a shepherd ;—where there were droughts and famines, and weary journeyings and storms, and, therefore, need of the green pastures and waters ;—where were wanderings and perils of destruction, and need of restoration and guidance ;—where were enemies, and need of defence and protection ;—where was the dark valley of the shadow of death, and, therefore, need of sustenance and companionship in its sole

and lonely passing ;—and it tells of the Great Shepherd who had laid down His life for the sheep, being all this to them through an indefinite lapse of time ; till the next Psalm again brings Him in as the King of Glory—the Lord of Hosts—mighty in battle,—taking possession of His own purchased inheritance, the earth,—to rule and be worshipped in it henceforth, until the last great victory—the victory over death, and the new heavens and new earth shall be created, and time shall be no more.

Again, in Isaiah xi. 1—6, is a description of the last days, when “the law shall go forth out of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem ;” and He shall rule in righteousness, and peace shall dwell in the earth. And then follows a long category of sin, and rebellion, and woe, and threatening,—interspersed here and there, when the burden might be hardest to bear, with a sweet word of

invitation and comfort for all who might be allured or willing to throw off the evil burden; such as, "a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and his name shall be called Immanuel;" and "unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given;"—"The remnant shall return, even the remnant of Jacob, unto the mighty God;" and the assurance held out when so bitterly needed, in the fearful warfare and final attack of the Assyrian, Satan's last great evil king, "Yet a very little while and the indignation shall cease." All beside is evil and judgment until the eleventh chapter,—when the rod out of the stem of Jesse comes forth to cut down the forests with iron, and Lebanon—the type of earthly glory—with a mighty hand,—and then all is rest and peace earth rejoices under the rule of the King of Righteousness, and His scattered ones are His ministers of blessing to the nations, and—gathered to stray no more—



they shall in that day sing as one their song of joy,—“ O Lord, I will praise thee. The Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song.”

The same thing is repeated from the thirteenth chapter, where “ the Lord of hosts mustereth the hosts of the battle,” “ from a far country, even the end of heaven,” as the weapons of His indignation ; and the nations are bidden to “ Howl, for the day of the Lord is at hand :” the day when “ Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees’ excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah ;” and Israel and Jacob, once more chosen and blessed, shall triumph over that evil kingdom, and possess the gates of their enemies, and send forth their rejoicing proverb against the fallen oppressor ;—the day when the Lord—Israel’s hope, even amid their blindness—hath broken the staff of the wicked, and the sceptre of

the rulers,—and the whole earth is at rest, and the nations break forth into singing. And then the spirit is brought back—back—to the realities of the present dispensation;—the blindness and sin and curse of Israel,—and the terrible burden of the nations—one after another—Moab, and Assyria, and Ethiopia—Egypt, and Tyre, and Babylon, and Jerusalem,—mingled with a promise, here and there, to some of them—to the last above all,—a promise—stern in its changeless authority—of future rule and peace, after fierce punishments and desolations shall have been wrought upon them. And then once more—once more—the Desire of Nations—the fulness of promised blessing, lost sight of by human eyes so long,—comes forth, at the time of earth's greatest darkness, and wickedness, and suffering,—and issues the decree, “Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise : awake and sing, ye that

dwell in dust, for thy dew is as the dew of herbs ; and the earth shall cast out her dead." " Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of hosts shall reign in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before His ancients gloriously." " He shall cause Israel to blossom and bud, and fill the world with fruit." " The meek also shall increase their joy in the Lord, and the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel ;"—till the day—the last of time—shall come,—and all foes shall be conquered—all tears shall be wiped from off all faces—and death shall be swallowed up in victory.

How like the revelation of the same facts, under other aspects, through Paul and John :—how eternally *one* is the Word of God !

Instances might be multiplied, but these will be sufficient to those who *read* when they take up the Word, in prayer—

ful willingness to hear what God would teach—as well from His own rules of working, as from direct precept to themselves. Those who do not, would not heed them.


But there is one essential difference between those forerunners of hope—those stay-words of blessing—given to the old prophets,—and this of John. They are all glimpses forth into the dispensation to which they pertain—they are all future. Israel was yet under the law, and therefore under the curse. The great Sacrifice had not yet been offered—the reconciliation not yet effected; and, therefore, all blessing—the whole rest of faith—necessarily lay in the future. With John it was not so. Christ had died, and was risen. He was glorified, and the Holy Ghost was given; and therefore the Church, possessed of the earnest, could rejoice in those same future glories, as her present, though unmani-

fested, inheritance. "The substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen," was hers already, and thus a vision of joy could be to her a revelation of present blessing. With John, the Church could look upon the throne as bearing towards her,—not an aspect which it will bear by-and-by, when she shall indeed be presented without fault before it,—but the aspect it bore then—bears now—is bearing, and will bear, on to the end of the age.

Yes! The vision is a present one, for the Rainbow—the bow of the covenant—the token of earth—still circles the throne; not as it spans the horizon of earth,—manifesting, in its wondrous and varied chord of colours, the manifold excellences of God earthward: it bears but *one* colour there, and that colour is the hue of the earth,—“in sight like unto an emerald;” showing that while God’s thoughts are occupied with earth—remem-

bering His covenant with it in His Son, earth's King—and looking at it, through the offering of acceptance, as a precious jewel, bright and beautiful,—earth does not so look upon the covenant it has broken;—that the time has not yet come for the Rainbow to bear the same significance in earth that it does in heaven;—not yet come when “the vail that is spread over all nations” shall be destroyed—when the new covenant shall be made with Israel which it shall break no more for ever, and “the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.”

The vision was present *then* when John looked upon it,—for the book, from whence was the future to be pictured, was yet in the hand of Him who sat upon the throne. It was not yet given to Him who was worthy—the Son of man—the Lamb still. The seals were yet unbroken, the hereafter unrevealed. And it



remains through all the dispensation, for we read of no change in that throne—no other throne until the millennial thrones are set in the earth,—and after them, the great white throne of final judgment—the second resurrection. And—before this dispensation closes, before the sun becomes black, and the stars fall, and the moon become as blood, in the day of wrath—even at the opening of the fifth seal, we see the souls under the altar crying for vengeance, and hear them told to rest yet till their brethren should be killed as they had been, and join them. Whatever, or wherever may be meant by the “under the altar,” it is evident that the souls there were not yet glorified nor crowned, as all saints will be when Jesus comes again.

The vision of the throne, then, pertains to this dispensation, and more especially to the time immediately preceding the giving of the book.

But who, then, are those elders and living creatures around the throne?

It is not until the great day of redemption, and after the faithful remnant of Israel and Judah are sealed,—that we see the “great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues”—those who “came up out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb,” standing “before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands.”

That day is not yet, but those elders and living creatures were before the throne *then*—centuries ago—perfected, glorified, and crowned.—Who are they?

They are not systems, nor corporate powers, for we read of one and another speaking, of individual and separate action.—Who are they?

They are created beings, for they in-

cessantly worship God. They are human and redeemed, for they fall down before the Lamb with the new song, "Thou art worthy—for thou wast slain, and *hast redeemed* us to God by thy blood—and *hast* made us unto our God kings and priests:" and yet the hundred and forty-four thousand who will stand with the Lamb upon Mount Zion, will sing a new song even before them—a song that even the elders and living creatures could not sing.—Who are they?

The living creatures—are they those who were translated that they should not see death—Enoch and Elijah? Moses, who was buried by the Lord in an unknown sepulchre, but about whose body, living, it would seem, and in heaven—and therefore changed—Michael the archangel disputed with Satan, saying, "The Lord rebuke thee:"—and who—glorified and perfected, even as Elias—talked with Jesus on the mount of transfiguration,—and

Melchizedec—he who was “king of righteousness and king of peace ; without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life ;” and who, “made like unto the Son of God,” and abiding a priest continually, is yet therefore *not* the Son of God—is he also one of them ?

They who thus served God in active and powerful executive service on earth, and were named thus gloriously—might they not fitly be those wondrous creatures, —with their bodies like the beryl—that precious stone, with its light, pale, bluish green, speaking both of earth and heaven—and their four faces, symbolizing intelligence and strength, patient endurance and swiftness of execution—so significantly typical of the Son of man, even as were those four human beings while on earth ? They whose part on earth savoured so much of the executive and of judgment, might they not fitly

represent the executive power of the royal priesthood in heaven ?

And the elders—they are not merely “souls.” They sit there in glorified humanity, face to face with God. We read in Matthew, that at the death of Jesus, when “the vail of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom, and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent ;” that “the graves were opened, and many *bodies of saints* which slept, arose, and came out of the graves *after His resurrection*, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many.”

Did these, thus wakened to immortality by the resurrection of their Lord, rise but to be mocked with the taste of life?—did they go back again into the abhorrent grave ?

It is not said,—but neither is it said that they had returned to a carnal life—to eat and sleep and toil—to live as others lived. Scripture is silent. No-

thing more is said of them. But we know that "Christ, being raised from the dead, dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over Him:" and we may judge that those who were raised from the dead—not by the working of a miracle, but by the power of His resurrection—were also exempt from the further dominion of death,—were partakers of that resurrection, and sat in heaven before the face of the First-born, who could thus look upon them as the earnest of the first-fruits of His seed,—and give them—being, as it were, the representatives, to Him, of the militant Church—the place of wisdom and knowledge and counsel which the whole Church shall, by-and-by, possess.

It may be so, but we may not affirm where the Word says nothing positively—we can only conjecture upon principles. And after all, their personal identity is of little importance to us, compared with

the place they occupy. These living creatures, thus encircling the Throne—and these elders, thus crowned, and seated like kings before Him who sits thereon, seem representatives of the whole Church—from the cry, “Thou hast redeemed us by Thy blood, out of every nation, and kindred, people, and tongue;” and representatives also of the office and standing which belong to the Church now, though hidden where her life is hidden, with Christ in God, and which she shall possess and manifest when He comes to be admired in her,—wisdom of counsel and executive power.

But how is it, since these possess those powers now prospectively, that we do not hear of their using them,—beyond a word from one, an action from another—just fitting into what God is doing? How is it that they appear simply worshipping and praising—almost wholly watching and waiting? They themselves give

the answer, "We shall reign on the earth."

Many super-spiritualized Christians, to whom the Bible is little else than dreams and symbols and metaphors, scoff at this as a miserable and earthy degradation—can it be so?

When God's eyes are ever toward the earth, and every line of His truth shows us that His thoughts are occupied with it continually, can it be earthy for His children to study and enter into His thoughts about it? When the Son of God counts it a glory and honour to return to judge and be worshipped here, where He was crucified—and looks forward with patient waiting to the time when He shall be the One King over the whole earth,—shall His people, for whom He did not despise the cross, count it a degradation to reign with Him then? When He rejoices "in the habitable parts of His earth," and places His delights with the sons of men,—shall

those who are *one* with Him feel it a misery to serve Him in the earth in which He rejoices, among the sons of men with whom are His delights—to bring glory to Him where He was dishonoured? Will it lower the Church to triumph with Him where she was despised for His sake—where she also was partaker of His sufferings?

Surely not!

This, then, shall be the sphere—the earth. Angels, created for heaven, and whose only home-sphere is in heaven, have thought it no degradation to be employed on God's missions here—have gloried in being the ministering spirits to the heirs of salvation here; and we, too, shall rejoice and deem it honourable to serve our God by carrying out His purposes in, and ministering to, the earth He loves. Then shall be the satisfying of our fruitless yearnings to serve now,—the change to liberty and power of our help-

less strugglings against the chain of cumstances coiled round us now. Sea shall be then the free volition of the he unhindered, for the flesh shall have cea for us,—unmarred, for no sin nor we ness shall be in us,—untouched by faili for Satan shall be chained. We s carry forth His glory, holy—might triumphant.

Those who seek reward here shall it of Him there. Those who seek fa here in any form of rule or teaching, s find their sphere of glory there. And wl ever of earthliness may mingle with tl motives and pursuits now, they will le *then* that “the praise of God is precie not so much because it *distinguishes*, because it *blesses*—because it is true, because it is from *Him* ;”—because that giving a greater capacity of receiv blessing, it gives that great joy of renewed heart—a greater capacity imparting blessing to others.

Seeing, then, that He hath given us so great salvation, let us, as co-workers with Him, work it out in the earth in which He placed us for that purpose; work it out with fear and trembling, lest we should, through ignorance or misapprehension, be working contrary to His mind. Seeing that we, of whom those elders and living creatures are the representatives, prospectively possess such a wondrous inheritance of glory and service, shall we not—by the earnest fulfilment of all given charges—the diligent exercise of all given talent—seek to be conformed to that inheritance, that glory and that service now,—that it may be to us then familiar as a long-known home? “Blessed is that servant whom his lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing.”

But—is it *all* service? Is there not a rest for the people of God?

Yes—but not *yet*. That rest *remaineth*.

The whole universe is teeming and flooding with life. Its every pulsation, animate and inanimate, vibrates in ever-restless action—in ceaseless motion—in mighty and struggling energy. “All things are full of labour; man cannot utter it.” And man is not exempt. To him, beyond all else, is existence a toil—a travail—a strife—a burden; and the heart within but echoes the life without. Hither and thither does he journey in the earth to search out knowledge. Wearily, yet persistingly, does he gather his treasures. Undying is his perseverance to accomplish his purposes. He rests not—he cannot rest—there is nought within him to claim affinity with rest. The very word, though a *future* hope, is a *present* loathing.

Why? Because life is life but in motion. Unchangeable inaction would


be worse than death to a creature full of life : and therefore, when the new life is implanted, is that eager yearning not destroyed, but heightened. Therefore does the heart, even of the child of God, so often turn from the calm, passionless beatitude of worship it considers as its portion hereafter, to seek more congenial pleasure in earthly work—for God or for the world—even though that work be unstrengthened and unrewarded.

He mourns it as the effect of sin ;—it is so—and yet the *foundation* of that feeling is a right one.

God's rest was broken by man's sin. Since then, "the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together."—"The foundations of the earth are out of course ;" and God will never rest until all this disorder is rectified—until He makes "all things new." He does not intend the earth or its inhabitants to rest till then. He does not give rest, and

therefore—under existing circumstances—rest is impossible : and the idle soul that attempts to make itself a rest now, but binds tighter the chain of earth's evil—deepens the slough of its desolations—and makes its day of vengeance more terrible.

Rightly, then, may the renewed shrink from rest, while their God is still working,—while earth's rest is broken, and its life perverted and distorted in a thousand evil ways. Rightly may they shrink from rest,—while sin and suffering, and disease and death, are rife as a whirlwind of destruction around them ; while souls remain ungathered, and the gathered grope for light like the blind, and sin in their darkness. Therefore may they know that their God has placed them here for work—work, in suffering, and sorrow, and weakness, it may be—but still work—earnest and unceasing ;—not only for the present, but probationary—a preparation



for a greater work hereafter—until they fall asleep. And then, as “souls under the altar”—whatever that may be—happy, but ceaselessly watching and waiting,—until that manifestation of the sons of God, which “the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for,” shall come, and the curse is taken away,—and their Lord takes the throne He, too, has been waiting for—and them with Him—and reigns. And they, in sharing His throne and His great power, shall minister before Him as priests and kings to earth, in loving and happy and glorious service.

Even then, God does not rest—neither may they. The flesh, though subdued, still exists in the unredeemed bodies of those who dwell upon the earth. There are enemies to be conquered, victories to be won. There is death still. All things must be made new—and that time comes at last. Death and

hell are cast into the lake of fire. The new heavens and earth are created, wherein dwelleth righteousness. God rests at last, and His people rest with Him. "The tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them; they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God."

There is rest for believers *now* in Jesus—rest partaking of the same character as that of the new creation, because belonging to it. There is rest in the waiting with Jesus, while He is interceding in heaven;—rest when, in glorified humanity, their rejoicing service shall be as the angels'—pure—powerful—perfect. But it is not *the* rest of the new creation—the rest that remaineth. God will rest then, and so shall His people,—let them not seek to rest till then. Knowing that that is the rest He hath prepared for them, let them beware how they seek any other.

CHAPTER V.

THE JASPER.

"That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ."

—1 JOHN 1. 3.

BUT that rest—that holy and eternal rest—is not yet. And nearer, the rest of sinless and successful service,—and closer still, the rest of happy, waiting service—though we do not know individually how near or far off this last may be—is not yet. And meanwhile, we are in a world where sickness and bereavement, and guilt and grief—crime and misery, and want and pollution, rage in ways so innumerable that imagination is baffled to count them—so horrible

that the soul is sick at their bare contemplation. We are placed here to minister where our ministry is spurned and despised, or received often in evil motives ;—to be light to those who love darkness—and give light to those who will not have it ;—to plead with those who will not hear us, and warn those who look upon us as dreamers and fools ;—to sow in tears and heart-sickness, and reap but little fruit—and how do we fulfil our mission ? We are passing through our probation—that which determines what we shall be hereafter,—how are we passing it ?

Let us not plead our ignorance, and weakness, and infirmities, in excuse for our failure—our desertion of duty—our breach of trust. God knows them all better than we can know them ; and He knows, too, that those who served Him as we do not, had the same passions and the same infirmities with ourselves.

God has not placed us in a position of

such fearful responsibility, without fitting us for it. The thought would be an absurdity. He *does* fit us for it. He gives not only the wisdom needed, but the freedom to have it *when* we need it;—not only daily strength and suited grace, but—what is quite as needful, yet so seldom thought of—motive power.

Service is nothing without a definite aim—life is not life without motive power—and He gives it.

The love of Jesus to us is *the* great stimulus of the new life—its *one* motive power; but as “the heir, while he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant,” so that love—being human as well as divine—fits itself to humanity by working in it human developments, suited to us as dependant creatures; and those developments vary in different individuals, according to the spheres in which He wills them to be employed. The striving to win the rewards offered by that love—

the seeking the praise of that love—a but different forms of its operation motive power in us,—until the *child* spirit shall be *matured*—and “the love Christ, which passeth knowledge,” shall be shed abroad in our hearts in all fulness—and “that which is in part shall be done away.” And therefore, though the hope of reward, the love of fame, and motive powers—and mighty ones—there yet another, without which both the others would be worth but little.

The hope of reward, being chiefly in the future, cannot always stimulate amidst present pressure and present weakness. It flags—the spirit fails and falters and true service ceases when it becomes a burden.

The love of fame is a passion, and therefore more quenchless and enduring: but *alone* it would ruin the best developed character on earth. It isolates the soul from its fellows;—it makes the disposition

cold, unloving, and unloveable ;—it mars that service which should include “all things that are lovely and of good report” towards others.

Besides, there are many hearts which neither of these can touch. Too quiet and satisfied in the duties and present peace of the sphere in which God has placed them to crave more rewards in the future—too gentle and lowly and ungifted to care for high aims and standing,—what shall win them to service and sustain them through its trials and cares,—what shall be their motive power, for the present and the future? What motive power shall, while it assimilates with, be the stay and the strength of both the others,—blend—soften—and perfect them? SYMPATHY!

Where do we see this motive power in the scene before us?

Not in the Rainbow—that tells of covenant security and covenant keeping,

of God's thought and care and pity—but not of sympathy. It may make service free and fearless, but it forms no motive power:—we must look for that beyond the Rainbow.


Where ?

To the throne of God.

“ He that sat thereon was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone.”

The sardine stone—the blood-red ruby—that which tells always and everywhere of judgment,—is that found *within* the Rainbow ? Yes !


Saints are mistaken if they think the evil and rebellion shall meet no judgment. “ Thou wast a God that forgavest them though thou tookest vengeance of the inventions ”—“ Judgment must begin in the house of God : ” not final—not condemnatory—but judgment in chastening. “ When we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.” He who w



once their scape-goat, to "bear all their iniquities into a land not inhabited," is there. "In the midst of the throne, and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a *Lamb as it had been slain.*" God has seen the blood upon them, and passed them over. He who is in the midst of the throne is in the midst of them also. Henceforth,—one with God, one with Jesus—for He who dwelleth in God dwelleth in them—they shall judge the world, and judge angels, but they themselves have nothing more to do with wrath for ever. In believing, they have died in Him—have risen with Him. They and the Son of God are one, and cannot be separated—one nature, one spirit, one soul, one body—**ALL ONE.**

But there are *two* stones representing *One*—and wherefore two? He who is set down with the Father in His throne—the Son of God—is God and man. Might

not the semi-opaque, half-pellucid jasper—with its bright and beautiful green—its comparative softness and earthly admixture, which make men rank it as scarcely among the precious stones—represent that human nature which Jesus has, in His own person, united to the Godhead for ever? Might not the jasper typify that “living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious”—who “forasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, also Himself likewise took part in the same; that through death He might destroy him that hath the power of death, that is, the devil”? And might not the crimson and purple spots which distinguish the best jaspers, represent that shedding of blood through which Jesus redeemed His brethren,—and that royal dignity which, thus dying, He won back from the adversary, to whom man had given it—and thus became “the second Adam”—the Head of the new creation—



“the first-born from the dead, that in all things He might have the pre-eminence”?

There, then, in Him,—represented by the jasper—the perfect nature of perfect humanity,—dwells that motive power, which, less sought, is yet above all others—sympathy.

“For verily He took not on ~~M~~im the nature of angels, but He took on Him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.”

There, then, is the personification of sympathy. The jasper, the sympathy in nature and spirit—the Lamb, the sympathy in action. “The Lamb that is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them to living fountains of

water." And these two forms of pathy—communion of spirit, and fellowship of action—are one, and cannot be divided. And those who, like the Mystics, dream that they can have strength and sustenance of fellowship with Him without having fellowship with His walk and life towards others and those, now, who conceive that they have real communion with His sympathy while they do not seek to follow Him while they are careless of evil, and are wandering in forbidden paths—are in *grave error*.


The jasper is clouded with transparency white. All else pertaining to it must be seen through that holy veil. No mortal vision can touch that pure, crystal covering. He who was "tempted in all points as we are, yet *without sin*," "put away by the sacrifice of Himself;" and those who would indeed seek to be united with Him, and live in the sympathy

His secret heart, all sin must be put away.—“Be ye holy, for I am holy.”

And those who are straying from Him—seeking to turn again to the weak and beggarly elements from which they appeared to have escaped—let them beware as to whose they are; for, while “God knoweth them that are His,” the counter-sign of the seal, to themselves and others, is “Let him that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.” Emphatically does Jesus say, “He that committeth sin is the servant of sin; and the servant abideth not in the house for ever, but the son abideth ever.” And even if they be surely His, let them not deceive themselves with the vain idea of peace or communing with Jesus, while they are making peace with the world—His enemy. They are walking in the flesh, and Jesus has no sympathy with the flesh—it is “the accursed thing” His soul hateth. They

are having "fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness" He came to destroy, and He cannot commune with them there; He pities them—He will seek and bring them back, often with bitter chastening;—He can feel *for* them, but He cannot feel *with* them. Sin has come in to hinder communion between them. They regard iniquity in their hearts, and He cannot even hear them—He has *no* fellowship with them *there*. Let them speedily come out of their evil place, for it would be sad for a child of God to be saved but just so as by fire, and to be stripped of all fruit, in that day.

And if Jesus can have no communion with even His own who are walking in evil ways,—how greatly must they err who would give Him sympathy with the sinner—the experiences of the unconverted! Surely they must have strangely mistaken the character of Him who was "holy,



harmless, undefiled, and *separate* from sinners ; " and who, because of that very separateness, could pity, and love, and yearn over — could touch and save. There can be no concord between Christ and Belial,—and—save the natural feelings of that humanity He shared with them—there is nothing for sympathy to work upon. There is love—and He who is love can alone know His own heart's depth of compassion for them—but sympathy supposes affinity, and there is no affinity there.

But in all beside,—in all save sin,—more fathomless than the ocean—more boundless than the universe—more enduring than eternity—more life-giving than the gladdening sunlight—more precious than all precious things—is the human sympathy of Jesus.

It is a bitter thing to be alone. He only who formed man in His own image,

and understandeth the spirit within him, knows how bitter. He gave him companionship, because it was "not good for man to be alone," even in paradise. Social love and sympathy are, by creation, instinct in humanity,—and the fall, which destroyed so much, destroyed not that. Earth is full of man's attempts to gather around him human fellowship, in his ties of family—ties of sympathy—ties of brotherhood,—and the few broken distortions of fellowship the fall has left him, have been his heart's dearest earthly home.

"It is *not good* for man to be alone"—and those who have left their fellows in the vain hope of finding or propitiating God in the solitary cell, or the barren wilderness,—what a cipher have they been to others—what a desolation to themselves!

It was God who said, "It is not good for man to be alone." It is He who

“setteth the solitary in families.” It is He who created those ties of love and kindred which twine themselves so mysteriously around the heart of man, and make the beautiful earth so pleasant to his eyes.

And yet, right as are those social fellowships in themselves, what are they—after all—now that sin has entered into them?

What are man’s human brotherhoods? Let the vast wars and ceaseless conflicts and fierce exterminations answer.

And though man everywhere seeks to gather himself into families, what is the earthly home, as a rule? Do not proud and perverse, and sullen and passionate tempers—and lawless, turbulent, undisciplined spirits, often make the home as wretched and as wicked as a den of wild beasts? Are not household affections outraged by want, affliction, and bereavement? Is

not a happy home the exception, unless among those whom God has gathered ?

And though "as in water face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man"—it is a solemn truth, that no heart can know itself, much less another,—that somehow, all are broken apart; and therefore, earth's poor substitute for sympathy—the joyless yearnings of fallen affection—is marred, and broken, and selfish : yet the human heart persistently seeks it,—and rightly, were that all ; but the God "who pondereth the heart," alone can estimate what the effects of the fall have been, in perverting and poisoning even this, the fairest of earth's treasures : and how — alienated, separate, far from God—this restless seeking of social ties—this ceaseless conglomeration of human brotherhoods—is but man's desperate effort to make peace where there is no peace,—to be happy apart from God. He knows that they cannot

succeed ; that the fierce and discordant elements of human spirits cannot mingle, because of what they are ; that the great link of human brotherhood is wanting where He is not ;—and therefore Jesus came—as much to gather a family as to redeem the sinner,—to be the soul's *Home* as well as its Saviour.

Christians have overlooked this too much. In their zeal for the worship of His Godhead, they have forgotten His Manhood. They have sought Him as the Saviour, neglected Him as the Friend ;—and—little as they have known Him as the King, they have known Him still less as the Brother. Therefore, while rejoicing in Him as Redeemer, they have turned to earthly ties to satisfy their right craving for human sympathy : and, though ever finding that earthly ties had no power to fill that vacuum, they have yet been all unconscious that He came to fill and satisfy it.

They have forgotten that He could say, "I am become a stranger to my brethren, an alien unto my mother's children"—and for the hour of His fearful sorrow, "I looked for some to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none"—for "*all* forsook *Him*, and fled;"—and that *therefore* He can be to the soul, what none else in the universe can be to it,—the perfect companionship of perfect sympathy. Or if they have not forgotten it, they have lived as if they had.

It should not be so. It is well that He is one "who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way;" that His own human heart yearns for human sympathy as much as theirs—though *not as* theirs; and that therefore has He so often drawn them unconsciously to seek His sympathy, or given it unasked.

And surely it can be but natural to

believe that He who "was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief," should have fellow-feeling with us in our trials now. Surely He who "hath borne *our* griefs, and carried *our* sorrows," must be better able to sympathize with those griefs and sorrows than our mortal friends, who never bore them, and whose partial sympathy, therefore, can only measure ours, which they cannot know, by their own, which they may know. Is it not "For in that He Himself hath suffered, being tempted, He is able also to succour them that are tempted"? Cannot He, who in some mysterious sense, "learned obedience by the things which He suffered," and "was made perfect through suffering," enter with a compassionate tenderness of fellowship above all others, into the feelings of those who are learning obedience in the same way?

When the ransomed soul, awakened, at length, by the Spirit's effectual calling,

bows in that great anguish, who
fering from any earth knows
holds yet a deeper peace, since
first struggling dawn of peace,—
near, though unseen—as yet
Well does He who, Himself sin-
cipatively confessed His people
them, remember the terrible
that wrath—the cry of that for-
which came upon Him when C
“ His soul an offering for sin.”
does He lead the mourner to
where “ He was made sin for
knew no sin, that we might be
righteousness of God in Him.”

All unconscious is the child of
which led him ; and though, in t
of his first love, he may rejoice
cution for Christ’s sake,—little
understand that the great sustai
his profession is in the secret
of Him who was “ despised and
of men ; ”—who could plead in

of soul, "reproach hath broken my heart, and I am full of heaviness." Little is he aware that, when the dishonour which men put upon him for His sake seems hard to him,—what makes it sit *so* lightly, is the coming down into his circumstances of the One who was called a Nazarene ; who, through all His holy ministry was "had in derision all the day long," and was "the song of the drunkards."

Long are they—the saved—in finding that that which makes sorrow, bitter as it may be, so easy for them to bear,—makes peace and blessing for them in every trial,—and makes chastening yield afterward the peaceable fruit of righteousness,—is not only that "the chastisement of our peace was upon Him—and with His stripes we are healed ;"—but that "in all their afflictions *He* was afflicted ;" because *He*, too, "in the days of His flesh, offered up prayer and supplication with strong crying and tears." Slow are

they to perceive that all joy they have in Him and His service,—all their ‘of faith, and labour of love, and peace of hope,’—are but emanations from the “I delight to do Thy will, O God” the “I will put my trust in Him” which characterized Jesus on earth which the Spirit who dwelleth in them and them, communicates to them the wondrous sympathy of that heart.

Long are they in learning this. Through defective human teaching, they learn it at all; and to those who carelessly or irreverently He will not teach it. But those who walk quietly the path of obedience, find gradually that there is no depth in human wisdom, no danger nor difficulty in earthly peace, no crushing of earthly trials—no circumstance, be it what it may, which cannot be met and entered into by the perfect human sympathy of Jesus. All

sympathy becomes an empty thing beside it—the lesson is learned at last.

Yet another step—one stage further—and they are taught one of the highest and happiest lessons that God teaches His children on earth.

When the neophyte—like a forlorn outcast taken into a king's house—first entered the family of God, all was new and strange. The halls and corridors, the state chambers and pleasant oriels, of his new home, were utterly bewildering. The order and habits of the household were difficult, and he had yet to learn them. He could not find his place; and many blunders did he commit in his officiousness to serve before he was trained to serve; many a chastening did he receive for transgressing the rules he was too hasty to learn. At first he was half-fearful in his Father's presence, as if he could hardly realize his *right* to be there—as if he still needed some one to turn

away wrath from him. He shrank half-shyly from the gentle eye of Jesus, as if he fancied that his Brother King was angry for having had to endure so much for him and with him. He trembled before the voice of the Spirit of truth, because he felt there was so much of evil in him, that he almost feared that Spirit's holiness, though he sought to love it.

But the grace and gentleness of that blessed Spirit have wrought a change—a great change. His palace-home is become as the home of his childhood, and its every stone is dear to him. Its routine is growing familiar as household words; he has learned his sphere, and falls naturally into it. He takes his place before his Father in gladness and holy freedom now. Jesus is a stranger to him no longer, but a long-tried and familiar friend, to whom the spirit clings in living tenacity. He has learned to confide in Him—his great trials—his petty every-

day vexations—everything,—to seek and claim and welcome that patient, loving sympathy with all the clinging earnestness of assurance. He rests upon that strong heart in all the simple repose of a weaned child.

And now that Jesus has disciplined the natural unhallowed daring of the heart into subjection, He leads him the step further,—teaches him the greater lesson—*Sympathy with Him.*

It is a wondrous thing for Jesus to have fellowship with the human soul: it is more wonderful that He should draw the human soul into fellowship with Himself—yet this is what He does. The one is a prelude to the other.

It is a great thing for the spirit which is conscious of depths no mortal may fathom, and which can meet no mortal response to its own peculiar emotions—and what thinking heart has not felt so at times?—to feel that there is One beside

it—nearer than all mortals—who converses sweetly with its most secret thoughts, and responds to its deepest emotions and queries :—but it is a great thing for the spirit to come out of its shell and enter into the spirit of that One, to commune, not only with his thoughts and feelings on earth—but his thoughts in heaven.

It is much for the teacher—the gift—who feels that deep truth is committed to his charge, to know that—when truth he seeks to make known to others is mocked and trampled down by them—Jesus entered with him into all the wilderment and perplexity of his hour of difficulty, and is with him now :—it is more to be able to feel with Jesus in the same circumstances ;—to look—when Truth was accused of blasphemy against God, and he himself feels that he cannot have restrained his bitter and burning indignation—to look into that wonder

heart then, and see that it had already met the enemy—the great arch-liar—met him in human weakness, looking up to God; that more than the agony of the death He had to suffer had passed upon Him then, and it was little to him hence what *man* could say of Him, or do unto Him; and that therefore He looked only on their blindness and condemnation, and pitied them,—“Father, forgive them, for *they know not* what they do:”—to follow Jesus through the Cross, and see that the very thing which seemed to cast truth for ever out of the earth, was its eternal victory in the earth:—to go with the truth down the long course of ages that it is the silent witness, till he sees all nations walk in the light of it for ever:—and then, bringing his own little sphere of testimony side by side, he is assured that its very casting down is the surest means of its success. “My word shall not return unto me void; but it shall accom-

plish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I send it."

It is precious for the pastor—the missionary in heathen wildernesses, and the missionary in the city's squalid haunts of crime,—for all who seek to serve God among others,—all who have sought, year after year—by day and by night, to gather precious souls, and have seen little or no fruit of their toil,—it is precious to feel that their Lord stands by them, in closest fellowship with their weakness, and weariness, and discouragement:—it is more precious to enter into the labours of Jesus;—to stand by Him where He says, "I have spread out my hands all the day to a rebellious people, and there to hold—one by one—with Him the links of that stupendous chain, by which Israel's rebellion and fall was the salvation of the Gentiles,—and the great apostacy of the Gentiles shall be th

bringing back of Israel, in the appearing of their Holy One for the blessing of all nations: to hear Him utter the strange words of human desolation, "I have laboured in vain, and spent my strength for nought," in the same breath with the very depth of human trust, "Yet surely my judgment is with the Lord, and my work with my God;" knowing that when He could say, "It is finished," that remained for Him, "He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied." And so walking with Jesus in their own little labours, they rejoice in the same assurance; that hereafter, they, too, shall reap the fruits of their earthly mission—that "He that goeth forth, and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

It is sweet for those who are endeavouring to serve Him in the thousand ways of undistinguished service—of quiet minis-

tering in the home—of patient endurance in tribulation—to feel that He, who was once a human child in an earthly home,—who “took on Him the form of a servant,”—who was a dishonoured Master and a disregarded Brother,—who “took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses,”—feels with them, and comforts them in all their weakness and pain and trial:—it is sweeter to enter reverently into what is written of His perfect fulfilling of human relationships; into those glimpses of His early manhood revealed in some of the Psalms—and here and there throughout the Word;—a series of years not *quiet*, perhaps,—for the command, “Thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, thou shalt not suffer sin upon him,” which was in the law He came to fulfil, would mar human peace for Him,—but undistinguished, save before God. And as they thus humbly seek fellowship with Him, they are strengthened in His patience **who**

fainted not, neither was weary. While His walking with them was the "Peace be with you,"—their thus walking with Him is a silent embalming of His name in the hearts of others—like the loving humility of her who brake the alabaster box to pour the precious ointment on His head, and meekly received the unqualified commendation of honour, "Wherever this Gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that she hath done shall be spoken of, for a memorial of her."

So shall it be with them.

This is a lesson which is never fully learned here, for we are finite, and Jesus is infinite. The longer we know Him, the more intimately we may know His heart. Even here we may have fellowship with the Father, and with the Son, but when we see Him face to face, then shall we know even as we are known—if

we may ever arrive at the end of that heart whose soundings are in eternity.

It is the highest and holiest motive power ; for whereas the others—though holy and authorized—originate in self—while they do not end there,—*this is all* unselfish. It absorbs the others—while preserving their activity—and makes them unselfish too. It is not merely the *tenderness* of human love ; for there are many forms of love—true, earnest, devoted love—to be found without sympathy, even in the Christian ; but sympathy—*such* sympathy—is one of the deepest and dearest habits of spirit that God's love creates. This it is which makes motive so much more prominent than reward—and the reward so precious because of its power to *serve*. It is not a purpose, for purpose supposes effort. It is a life, and there is no effort in simple life. It begins only with Jesus—it ends only with Him. It only seeks for other

that which it receives from God. It only folds around others that comfort and strength wherewith itself has been comforted and strengthened of God. It yearns to envelop others—all who mourn or suffer—everywhere—in that same holy and loving sympathy. It seeks not to receive from others, save as an occasion of increasing love. It knows that “it is more blessed to give than to receive.” Giving and ministering are its life.

And therefore is this motive power most enduring and mighty above all others in service. All others *may* flag and weary, being human ; this is unfaltering, for it is divine. It commends itself so to others. It wins and conquers what nothing else can. Hearts which rebuke hardens, and kindness irritates, are subdued and softened by sympathy—and such sympathy !—the loving and valuing the poor in Him who became poor for our sakes, that we might be made rich in Him;

the seeing the sick and the stranger in Him who was a stranger in the land of Egypt;—the becoming all things to all men, if by any means it might win some;—the entering into all phases of life and feeling—all circumstances of want and suffering, to bring them to Jesus, even as Jesus did to bring us to Him—Jesus—who counts all these offices of sympathy with Him as done to Him now.

And the reward—

It begins even on earth. The others look into the future for their reward; sympathy *brings* its reward with it. If anything can win love from others, it is the sympathy which lives for others. “With what measure ye mete, it shall be meted to you again.” If the courage and testimony which rebuke and witness *for* the truth are great, surely greater must be that sympathy which can *win affection to* the truth.

And as if mortal love and appreciation were a very little drop in the cup of blessing, there is ever the loving joy of fellowship with God,—the friendship of Jesus,—His appreciation of us, and our growing appreciation of Him,—the close, familiar, happy intercourse with Him,—until this mortal veil is withdrawn—

And then—

Those alone who know what it is to walk thus with Him now, may frame an idea of what it will be to know and appreciate Him fully then. While—possessing a place nearer than thrones and priesthoods—He folds them, as dear friends, in His arms, close to His inner heart—within Him;—and they look up into those eyes of love, and listen to the accents of that voice they know so well—they look back in perfect understanding of His life and sufferings on earth, and

enter into the perfect fellowship of His glory.

Even right human aims—the hope of reward—the aspiring for fame—these fade in their fruition;—but this—which is not an aim, but a life—cannot fade for ever. Its fruition is always running over, but never full—it dwells in the heart of God.

Let us “covet earnestly the best gifts,” yet let us seek too “the more excellent way.” While we give, God would have us, their due place and their due weight to the hope of reward and the glory of fame, let us live, above all, in the fellowship sympathy.

THE SERVICE CROWN.

SERVANT of God! One moment pause amid
Thy service toil of love,—and suffer those
Thy ministry hath blessed, to impart
One word to cheer thy spirit's weary way.
Long hast thou toiled, and deeply hast thou felt,
And mourned, for those so madly slumbering in
Their woe; who spurn that Shepherd whom thy soul
So loveth, and that fold where thou hast found
Thy rest: and thou hast known the with'ring pang,
The crushing bitterness—of toil that seemed
All unavailing;—prayer that seemed to bring
No answ'ring fruit;—it may be tears, wrung from
Unutterable yearnings, answered but
By sneering smiles from those for whom they fell.
And thou hast wept to feel as if thy way
Was made thus fruitless, even by God, because
Of thine own faithlessness—as if thy sin
Had made thy service worthless in His sight.
Fear thee not, fainting brother—thus may all
God's children feel, and rightly, did their toil
Rest its acceptance on *their* righteousness:

But 'tis not so—their service, as themselves,
Is all accepted in the Son of God ;—
And therefore, though their sin and failure may
Obstruct and mar their service, it can ne'er
Imperil what is rendered in the love
Of living faith,—for Jesus standeth there,
That they, and all they do for Him, might be
Well pleasing ever to their God through Him.
Then labour on—though earthly fruit be scant
To crown thy labours ; though the wakened cry,
“ What shall I do ! ” may seldom reach thine ears ;
Though few may own thee as God's messenger
Of peace to them ;—yet labour on—thy Lord
Delights in thee, and owns thy work as His :
And teaching thee to serve and please Him more,
He will sustain thy service, and indeed,
Make thee a vessel unto honour, fit
For holy use.

If still no fruit be seen—
Did *He* not toil in vain, and spend His strength
For nought, as to life-manifest results ?
And shall His servants shrink to bear His cross ?
No ! See thine heart be faithful, and bow low
In thankfulness that He doth count thee meet
To share *one* sorrow of His earthly path :
Then though the joy of winning souls be lost,—
Rejoice ! THE RIGHTEOUS SERVANT holds in heaven
A service crown for thee.

Still dost thou turn
In sadness even from thy reward, till those
Thou seekest share thy joy? Lift up thy head—
There is a word for thee. Who sent thee forth
To sow His word with tears, hath surely said
That thou *shalt* reap in joy; that thou should'st
come,
Doubtless, with precious sheaves. Thy Lord hath
toiled,
That *thou shouldst* gather fruit—which shall remain
For ever, owned as glory even to God.
If these be hidden now, it is that pride
May mar them not. Then on—in fervent strength—
And wait, in patient hope, His coming. Then
The flesh shall be no more, and those results
Thou long'st for now, shall burst upon thee like
A dazzling path of light: and thou shalt see
It may be, many, here unknown, Christ won
Through thee;—know how He framed thy ways to fill
Long links in that vast chain of means, whereby
His love drew others;—how He used thee oft,
To cheer some fainting fellow-labourer
And make his service win a brighter crown;—
How oft to mould the babe in Christ to paths
Of blest and faithful service;—or to take
Offences from the weak one's way, that he
Might know a stronger faith, and surer peace;—
How oft to pour the balm of Jesus' love

Into the wounds of some worn sufferer,
And fill his heart with singing ;—or to urge
Some laggard pilgrim on to throw aside
The cares which bound his soul in earthliness ;—
How oft to lead some wanderer, once perhaps,
A zealous servant, back from Satan's toils,
To his forgiving Shepherd—thence to be
The worldling's stumbling-block no more ;—or how—
Yes—*How* !—what mortal tongue can number all,
Or picture rightly, what those fruits shall be ?
We now see dimly, know but little—then
Shall all God's servants know the glorious crown
He giveth them for what *He wrought in them*.
And as their spirits, perfected, discern
In heaven's pure light, their earthly stewardship,—
Its failures—follies—now all swept away ;—
While their light toils, rewarded even on earth,
Are borne in living fruits to heaven, there
To shadow them with glory ;—well may they
Bow in excess of consciousness of joy—
And cast their crowns before Him, crying—“THOU
ALONE ART WORTHY—THOU HAST DONE IT ALL!”

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“READER,

“I am about to take you by the hand, and lead you from the cheerful toil of your bright kitchen—the home-shielding of your pleasant parlour—the dim seclusion of your studio, or the perfumed luxury of your drawing-room;—lead you out into the wide, chill night of this outer world, so bleak and desolate to the lone and shieldless. And, without pointing to the struggles and despair brooding over the shadowed earth-born, I will point you to the vault above us,—with its masses of rolling clouds,—its clear, gulf-like spaces—and the fair, silent stars which float there, now hidden, and now revealed. You do not know these shining ones; or.

you know them, you may not know the mysterious clouds which veil them. Watch awhile; I will draw the veil, and show you the 'stars' as I have seen

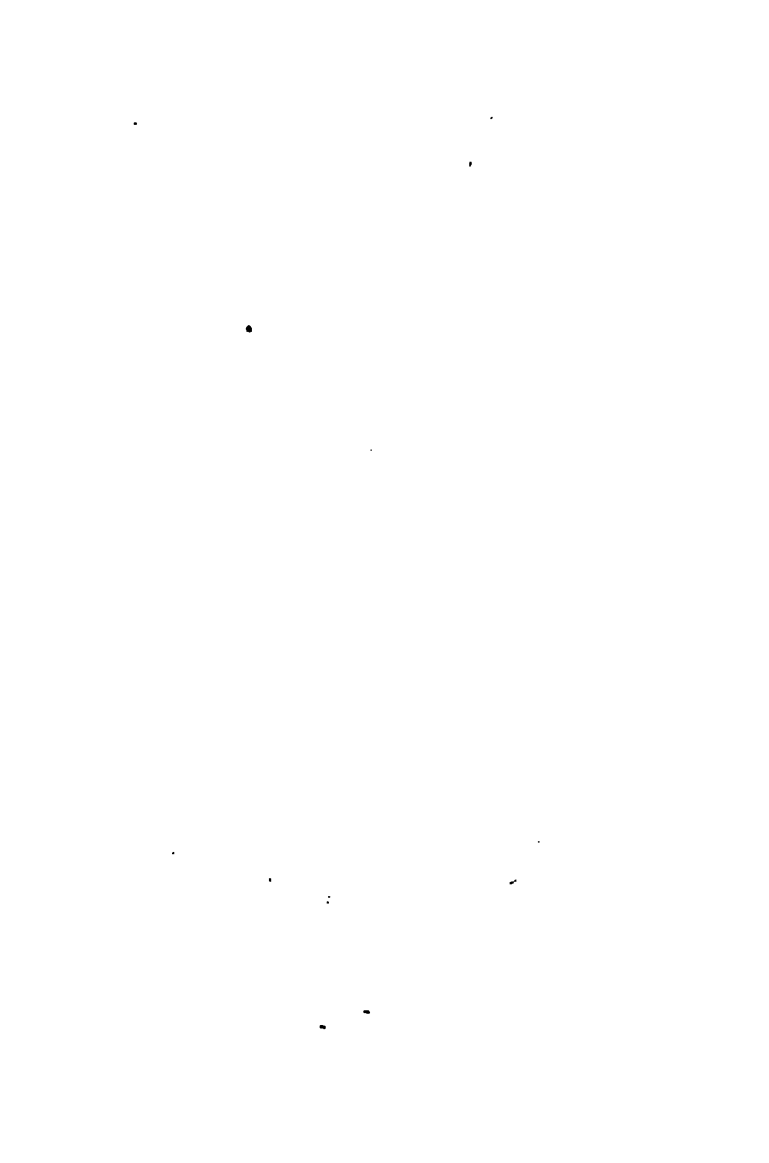
"I could not tell you how much of what I reveal to you is truth, without betraying confidence; therefore, if you choose to set down the whole as I shall take no trouble to contradict you.

"I may say, however, that the whole of the characters introduced were personally known to me, some almost under the very circumstances represented in that of Zaphie—fanciful as it might seem—has, its living counterpart. I admit that it is seldom met with in ordinary life. Any one who has been familiar with Jesuitism or Jesuits will recognize it is not common even among them.

As to her tale—the strange and mournful life of a nameless stranger, met with for a single night in a crowded hotel in a far land, supplied me with the material of its *matériel*.

"For the rest—let the 'Stars' and their 'Clouds' take care for themselves. And you—whom I hold by the hand if you be a child of the day, seeking to act as a child of the night—beware! For if our God is One who hides His hiding place, it is but to prepare 'He maketh darkness light before Him;' and the light which shines through the clouds which veil His face warns us to bring no hidden evil there."—PREFACE.

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